



GOTHAM CITY:

YEAR ONE

ISSUE #3

TOM KING
PHIL HESTER
ERIC GAPSTUR
JORDIE BELLAIRE



THE DARK KNIGHT VS.

HELL'S ELITE SOLDIER

BATMAN SPAWN

WRITTEN BY
TODD McFARLANE

ART BY
**GREG CAPULLO &
TODD McFARLANE**

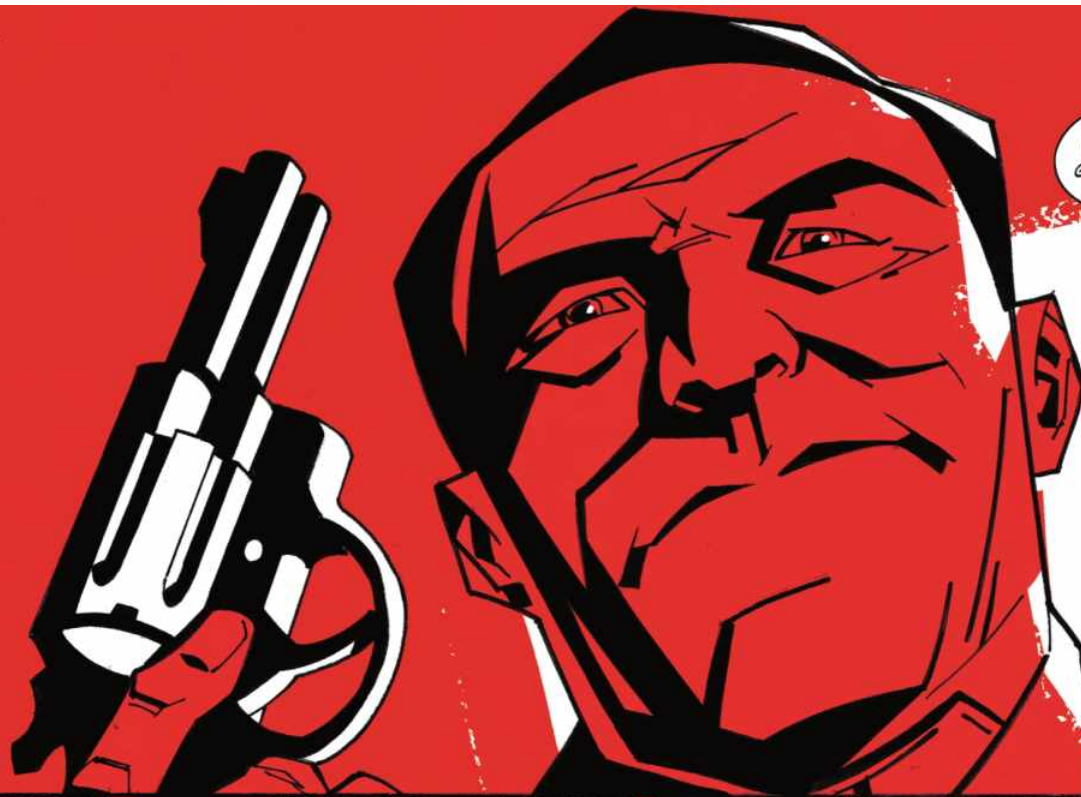
A BLOCKBUSTER
PRESTIGE FORMAT
ONE-SHOT

DECEMBER



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YOU KNOW
WHAT *THIS* IS,
GEORGE? I BET
YOU DON'T.

THIS HERE,
GEORGE, *THIS*
IS WHAT I CALL A
GOTHAM LIE
DETECTOR.

IT'S VERY
SPECIAL.



IT'S GOT
FANCY BULLETS.
THEY ONLY FIRE
WHEN YOU'RE
LYING.

CAN YOU
BELIEVE MODERN
TECHNOLOGY?

WE
ACTUALLY ARE
GOING TO SEND
A MAN TO THE
MOON.



WON'T YOU
LISTEN?!

I DIDN'T
HAVE ANYTHING
TO DO WITH *STEALING*
THAT. I BOUGHT IT FROM
A GUY ON THE *CORNER*.
THAT'S WHY I
HAD IT.

THAT'S
THE *GOD'S*
TRUTH.



H.M.
OKAY.

I
GUESS WE'LL
SEE.

WON'T
WE?









I went home
and took a
shower.



I got into bed.
I closed my
eyes.

And there
she was.



I got out
of bed.



I downed
a shot.



Then I
downed
another.



I lay
down
again.



And I
closed my

And there
she was.

Helen
Wayne.

The Princess of
Gotham City.



The little
girl lost.











I didn't touch the money.

I didn't even ask how much it was.



All I did was tell her there were no promises I could give right now that I could be sure of keeping.

But hope was often better than worry.

She said she understood, and she hoped I did too.

As she said it, she ground down on that "hope" like it was a seed in her orange juice.

Then she gave her goodbyes and left politely enough, leaving the money still lying on the desk.



After she was gone, I counted it.

Ten thousand, which went pretty far in those days.

A year's worth of cases wouldn't pay that much.



But the long and short of it was...

...I'd have done it for free.





The way she'd jumped and landed after our exchange, from one building to another, I couldn't believe it when I was watching it.

But looking back with some time to consider, there was a simple enough explanation.

It wasn't her first time.



She'd practiced. Which meant she had regular access to the roof.

YES, MA'AM, IF WE COULD MEET TONIGHT, PLEASE, IT'S GREATLY APPRECIATED.



I'M VERY SORRY TO INCONVENIENCE YOU, BUT IT IS A POLICE EMERGENCY.



So maybe she stayed in the building, or her family did. You could trace that through the rental records, if they kept them.

Problem with that is, this was the North Side: even a crumbling edifice didn't encourage her type to lay their heads down in this part of town.



But the supers did hire "those people" from time to time to go in and clean the rooms between white renters.

Businesses like hers don't have offices. Easier to avoid the taxman.

YOU SAID YOU WERE A COP. YOU'RE NO COP.



I met her in a parking lot down on the South Side. She walked me to a bar, told me I was buying.

NO, I'M SOMETHING BETTER.

I NEED TO ASK YOU ABOUT ONE OF YOUR GIRLS.



I GOT A LOT OF GIRLS.



OKAY.

YOU HAVE A THING FOR US?

YOU SOME SORT OF NORTHY SICKO DOWN HERE SO DAMN PROUD OF YOUR SLUMMING?

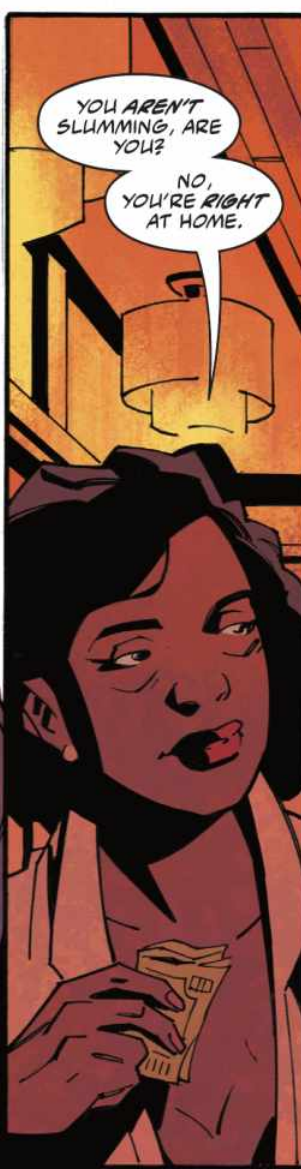


HOW MUCH DOES IT TAKE TO GET FEWER QUESTIONS?



MORE.





She remembered one of her cleaners who worked at the Finger. One who got in trouble there a few times for slacking off.



A young, ambitious girl who was always twirling around. Like a ballerina.

ROOM
After Hours Club

I spend the next hours going from one South Side club to another asking after a dancer named Queenie.

There were quite a few joints, then on quite a few blocks. I dropped a lot of sawbucks.



Everyone called her "Queenie."



She didn't have any records for the woman. She paid everyone in cash. That taxman again.

Best she could say, Queenie left her a year and a half ago, bragged that she got a gig high kicking at one of the jukes.

The Rhythm Room

G H T L
DANCING

From scrubbing to hoofing. Quite a journey. Sticks out in a person's mind.



I still would've done it



YEAH, *QUEENIE*... *QUEENIE* WAS A REAL MOVER AND SHAKER. SHE COULD SPIN IT, MAN, AND WHEN *SHE* DID IT, *STAYED* SPUN.

JAY WENT WITH HER FOR MAYBE HALF A MINUTE THERE, I *THINK*. JAY'S GOT LUCK IN HIS SHOES.



LAST NAME?



JAY! YOU REMEMBER THAT *QUEENIE*? YOU KNOW, WITH THE *LEGS*, YOU HAD HER OUT?!

WHAT'D SHE CALL HERSELF?! *WHOLE* NAME, I MEAN. REMEMBER SHE WAS TRYING TO GET IT ON THAT *MARQUEE* WE HAD?!



LYDELL.



LYDELL, YEAH. SHE WANTED IT *UP* THERE. IN LIGHTS.

SEE THAT, FRIEND? YOU PAY THE *FULL* TICKET PRICE, YOU GET THE *FULL* SHOW.

EVERY CUSTOMER SATISFIED.



Might not have been anything. An alias or even the wrong woman altogether. I wasn't grasping at straws, I was praying for them.

Which is to say I didn't know anything about anything.

But at least I knew I wasn't going to find anything about anything in the phone book.

DING
DING

WELCOME, BROTHER.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

I NEED AN ADDRESS, MA.



SAMUEL
TAYLOR
BRADLEY.

THIS
IS HOW YOU
SAY HELLO,
NOW?

BIG
SWANKY,
YOU.



SORRY. YOU LOOK
NICE.

AND
I GOT THE
NAME OF A GIRL.
I NEED AN
ADDRESS.



I
DO LOOK
NICE.

THANK
YOU.



QUEENIE LYDELL.
YOUNG. TWENTIES.
PRECOCIOUS.

A DANCER
WHO WORKED OUT
OF GIN AND JIVE. LEFT
ABOUT A MONTH BACK.
USED TO DO DOMESTIC
WORK FOR MIRIAM'S
CLEANERS.

IT'S
IMPORTANT.
HAS TO BE DONE
QUICK.

WHEN ARE
YOU NOT IN A
HURRY?

DO I
LOOK LIKE I
HAVE THE WHOLE CITY
MAP IN THESE
CARDS?

NO,
MA.

BUT YOU
GOT EVERY ALDERMAN,
PREACHER, AND JUDGE
ON THE SOUTH SIDE COMING
THROUGH HERE THINKING
YOU CERTAINLY
MIGHT.

SOMEONE
NEEDS TO BE
FOUND, YOU
KNOW THE PEOPLE
WHO CAN FIND
THEM.





I got back to my office.
She called me shortly
before sunup.

James Lydell lives at 141
Toth. His niece has been
staying with him, she
told me.

"She's supposed
to be some sort
of dancer."

I knocked on the door. I knocked
for a while. Finally, a man came
down and opened it.

I guessed this
was James.

#&@%\$, WHAT
DO YOU WANT AT
THIS HOUR? YOU EVEN
KNOW WHAT TIME
IT IS?



I had a plan on how to get in.
What to do if Sue answered,
what to do if James answered.
Not a great plan, but a plan.

Then I heard the
baby crying.

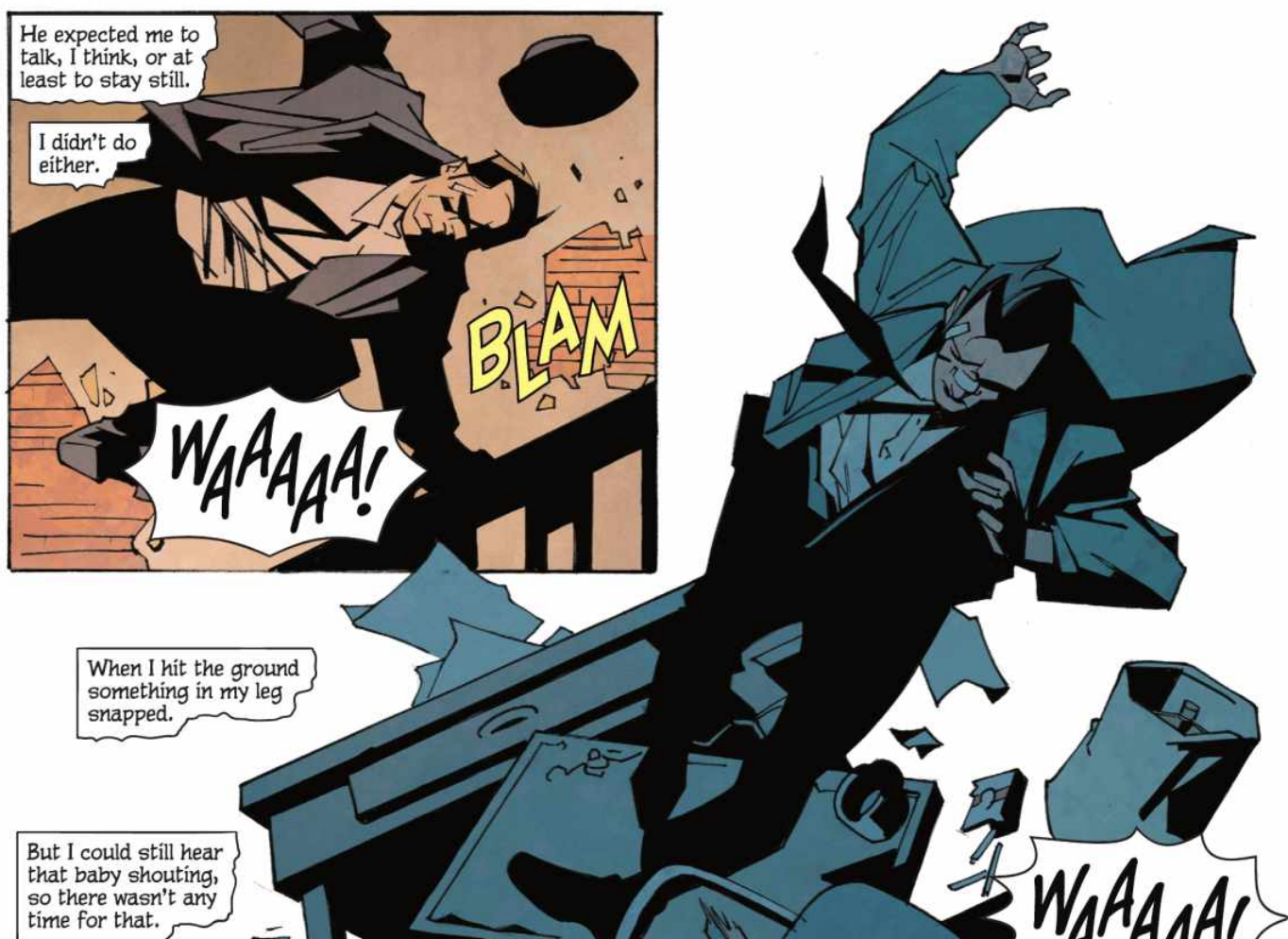
WAAAAA!



And my plan
went down with
the door.

WAAAAA!

CRACKKK





I charged at him, put my head down.

WAAAAA!

BLAM

And I was lucky enough to get there before he had that gun pointed right.



WAAAAA!



I put him down.

WAAAAA!

SLAM



I got up.

WAAAAA!



I went back to the stairs to find Helen.

WAAAAA!

WAAAAA!

I won't lie to you, as I entered that room, I had some fantasies going through me I'm not so proud of now.

WAAAAA!

Images of bringing the princess home to her mother, of seeing her smiling in the paper and knowing it was me that did it.

Watching the whole city snapping into a parade. Everyone is saved. Let's celebrate in the streets. Hooray.

WAAAAA!

And then I looked down at the child in her crib.

WAAAAA!

@%#%.

And I realized I'd just cracked into some random fellow's house, clocked him out because his kid was crying.

Probably just crying 'cause I was knocking so hard and long.

I'd gotten it all wrong.

Or that's what I thought, until I spied the yard out the window.

There was a shovel by the side of the fence.



I went to the spot I'd seen from upstairs.

A few square feet of brown dirt in the far west corner of the lawn. Where everything else was well tended green grass.



As if this one spot had recently been disturbed. As if a small pit had been gouged out and covered over.

I dug.

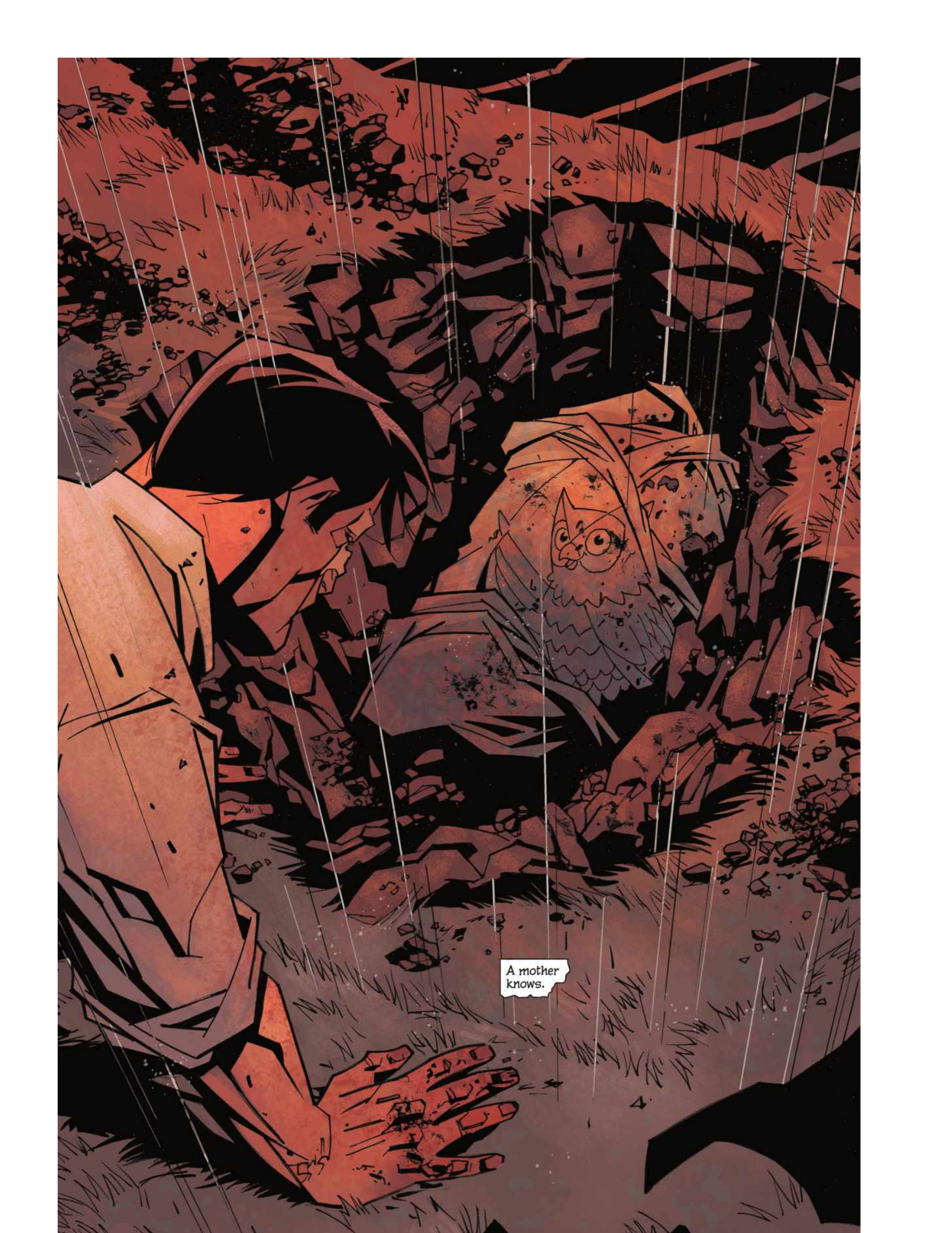
And as I dug, I kept thinking about how calm she'd been.



How she'd looked me right in the eye without a shake in her voice and told me the only truth there really is to be had.

The only truth I believe a man can cling to when all else brings you low.



A dramatic comic book illustration in a dark, moody style. The scene is set in a rocky, mountainous landscape under a heavy rain. A large, dark, hooded figure, presumably a mother, is shown from the chest up, looking down with a somber expression. In the foreground, a small child with a large, bushy beard and a pointed hat looks up at the mother. The child's face is lit with a small, hopeful expression. The background is filled with jagged, dark rock formations and heavy rain falling in thick, vertical lines. The overall color palette is dominated by dark reds, browns, and blacks, creating a sense of tragedy and urgency. A speech bubble from the child contains the text "A mother knows.".

A mother
knows.



My mind wandered back
as I felt something in me
I hadn't felt in a while.



See, I used to be a cop. Even rose up
to detective. Youngest on the force.

I lied some to get there, but it was
a different time. You had to tell
lies to get any scrap back then.

JESUS CHRIST!
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU
THINK YOU'RE DOING,
BRADLEY?!

YOU OUT
OF YOUR DAMN
MIND?!



On the force, I'd seen every angle, dirty stuff,
mean things you read about in books and
sometimes get around to in your nightmares.

And none of it
bothered me.

YES.



Just figured that was the price we
paid to live in our great, prosperous,
and ever peaceful Gotham City.

SLAM



Then this one day, I was just going about
my business, watching something else
with some mean in it.

And all of a sudden, well,
Bruce, I think maybe
you'd understand.

Hell, you'd probably
be the only one who
would understand.



I didn't want to pay
that price anymore.

And I found
myself plenty
bothered.

TO BE CONTINUED!

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Tom King**

CHAPTER THREE

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**Colors by
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**Letters by
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**Main Cover by
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Eric Gapstur
& Jordie Bellaire**

**Variant Cover by
Greg Smallwood**

**1:25 Variant Cover by
Francesco Francavilla**

**Editor
Ben Abernathy**



This comic contains language of a racially offensive nature and may not be suitable for all age groups. Its inclusion is an intentional creative choice intended to highlight the fact that language of this type was frequently deployed in past decades and remains in use today, even as contexts evolve. Readers for whom such language is triggering or hurtful should be advised.

JOINING THE JUSTICE LEAGUE IS EVERY
HERO'S DREAM. UNTIL IT'S A NIGHTMARE.

DANGER STREET

Written by
TOM KING

Art by
JORGE FORNÉS



DC NATION SPOTLIGHT ON

BATMAN SPAWN



**DON'T MISS THE BATMAN/SPAWN PRESTIGE
FORMAT ONE-SHOT ON SALE THIS DECEMBER!**

INTERVIEW WITH GREG CAPULLO

Two comics icons meet once again in *Batman/Spawn*, a Prestige format one-shot by legendary Spawn creator Todd McFarlane and superstar Batman artist Greg Capullo.

What's exciting about Batman and Spawn coming together once again?

It's about a good time! It's about making a comic book that people wait and long for. These are the milestone events that people look forward to. If you want to know what *Batman/Spawn* is about... it's about bombastic bombardment of fun!

Why is this exciting for longtime fans as well as new readers—or fans who have been away from comics?

I've seen comments on the art I've been teasing online. People have been saying, "This is making me feel like a teenager again," and it does. It's that sense of nostalgia, and when you see something that brings you back, you want to go on that ride. That's what *Batman/Spawn* is. For the newcomers it's also going to be something really cool, and it'll become theirs. So it's a win-win on both sides of the fence.

What's it like collaborating with Todd McFarlane again?

For me, the best times I've had working in comics have been with Todd McFarlane. Working with him again is like putting on comfortable shoes that have already been broken in. We're doing exactly what we used to do in the same way we used to do it. Also working with Todd, who's a fellow artist, he understands the mechanics of it all and what will and won't work. I'm loving every minute of it.

Do you have a favorite page from the one-shot?

There are plenty of them. The most recent one for me is the first dramatic shot of our two main characters. It's a double-page spread with Spawn and his chains and Batman with his batarang. So far that's the one that really sums up the Batman-Spawn crossover.

What do you want people to walk away from this comic thinking?

I want people to say, "Man, comics are a blast!" When I was a kid and discovered my first spinner rack and saw all the colors and heroes...the allure that captivated me and drew me in was unescapable. When fans grab this, that's what I want them to feel.

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SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN...
THIS MONSTER!"

